

Association of Washington Business

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Washington state's
chamber of commerce

January 29, 2008

Mr. David Dicks
Executive Director
Puget Sound Partnership
P.O. Box 40900
Olympia, WA 98504-0900

Mr. William D. Ruckelshaus
Chair, Leadership Council
Puget Sound Partnership
P.O. Box 40900
Olympia, WA 98504-0900

Re: 2008 Puget Sound Partnership Legislation

Dear Mr. Dicks and Mr. Ruckelshaus:

On behalf of the Association of Washington Business (AWB), I'm writing in regard to numerous bills that have been introduced during the 2008 legislative session that alter the powers and duties of the Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership).

As you know, AWB supported ESSB 5372 during the 2007 legislative session, which created the Partnership. In accordance with the recommendations of the Governor's 2006 Puget Sound Partnership Blue Ribbon Commission, AWB advocated for a collaborative, non-regulatory process for meeting the Governor's goal of cleaning up the Puget Sound by 2020. For this reason, AWB opposed the Partnership having regulatory authority and worked hard with the Governor's office, legislators and other stakeholders to ensure the Partnership did not have such authority.

AWB is currently working with Partnership leadership and staff to provide recommendations for development of the statutorily-mandated Action Agenda, which is due by September of 2008. We appreciate your inclusion of the business community during this critical time, but have some very strong concerns about legislation that has been introduced this legislative session.

For example, HB 2553, which was heard by the House Ecology & Parks Committee on January 25th, adds a new section to RCW 70.105 (Hazardous Waste Management). This bill appears to grant the Partnership direct regulatory authority over other state agencies. Specifically, page 4,

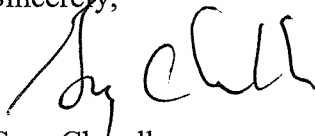
subsection (3), lines 29-31 states “[t]he leadership council of the Puget Sound partnership maintains *full discretion* to consider and vote on the petition under procedures set by the leadership council.” A variety of other bills also hint at regulatory authority or prematurely suggest items that should be included in the Action Agenda.

SB 6307, which was heard by the Senate Water Energy and Telecommunications Committee on January 22nd, requires the Partnership to include Marine Managed Areas in its Action Agenda. Prematurely requiring Action Agenda items circumvents and pre-empts the work and recommendations of the Ecosystem Coordinating Board and underlying Action Areas.

As you know very well, the Partnership has a tall order to fill in crafting a comprehensive Action Agenda by September 2008. It is our belief the last thing the Partnership needs is additional work at this time. It is for this reason we would appreciate the Partnership’s public opposition to this and any legislation that modifies its charter, provides regulatory authority, or prematurely suggests items that should be included in the 2020 Action Agenda.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions. Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Chandler".

Gary Chandler
Vice President of Governmental Affairs
Association of Washington Business

cc: The Honorable Christine Gregoire, Governor
Bruce Beckett, Senior Advisor to Governor Gregoire
Sam Anderson, Ecosystem Coordination Board Member
Bill Dewey, Ecosystem Coordination Board Member